

Lives in pairs near the banks of the White Nile, on low shrubs and high trees. Flutters Thrush-like from branch to branch. The song is very sweet and variable. The food consists of insects and worms. My birds were collected in the months of February and March; and I do not know whether *C. guttata* is resident or not.

XXIV.—*Ornithological Notes from the Ethiopian Region.* By ROWLAND M. SPERLING, Acting-Commander, H.M.S. 'Racoon.'

THE following notes were taken during the months of October, November, and December 1867, when the 'Racoon' went from Simon's Bay, Cape of Good Hope, to Zanzibar and back, touching at some intermediate places. The exhaustive catalogue which my friend Mr. Layard has recently published on the birds of South Africa is so complete that I have not here noticed many birds that came under my observation, as it would only have been going twice over the same ground; and I have furthermore availed myself of his knowledge of the avifauna of this country to request him to verify the specimens that I brought back, a task which he has kindly performed.

We started from the Cape on the 7th of October. Standing out of False Bay, before the last puffs of a north-westerly wind, its usual ornithological features were presented. Small flocks of Gannets hovered over the shoals of fish that frequent these waters, occasionally making perpendicular swoops on their prey. A few Penguins, with nothing but their quaint grey heads visible, uttered their melancholy whistle and sank like phantoms as we glided by, while immense flocks of Shags were flying in triangular-shaped flocks from Cape Point, to which extremity they always retire in northerly winds. We had not lost sight of Cape Hangklip when every breath of air left us, and for two days we lay on the Agullas bank, "as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean"—a most unusual occurrence to happen off the Stormy Cape. However, I availed myself of the calm

to pull about in a boat and secure specimens of the various pelagic birds that visited us. I found the mouths and throats of *Thalassidroma melanogaster* full of a dull ruddy spawn, which floated on the surface of the sea all round us in large blood-red patches. I ascribe to it the phosphoric glare of the water, which, on still, dark nights, makes these seas so luminous; and I should also fancy that in the daytime its appearance would very likely give rise to the numerous reports of fancied shoals that are constantly being brought to the Cape, and which on investigation are invariably found to be false. On the 9th of October a strong westerly wind sprang up, which, in a few days, blew us along the southern extremity of the African continent into lat. 32° S. and long. 43° E.; during the whole of the distance we were accompanied by large numbers of Cape-Pigeons and Black-bellied Petrels, sometimes as many as fifty of each species being in sight at one time, while we also saw every day three or four specimens of the Wandering, Common, and Black Albatros, as well as the large Black Petrel. We were now approaching the south end of Madagascar and the Mozambic channel; and on the 19th, when we had arrived at the 27th parallel of south latitude, all the Albatroses and Petrels left us, the little *T. melanogaster* penetrating a few miles further to the northward than the others. I did not, however, see a single *Procellaria æquinotialis*; and I only can account for this by supposing that they had all gone to the south to breed. On my voyage from England, it was in this latitude that I first noticed the Albatros and the large Petrel, and when returning from Zanzibar I again fell in with them within sixty miles of the same place; from these facts, confirmed by the answers made to inquiries of other sailors, I am led to infer that this is their extreme northern range.

These pelagic birds appear to be influenced by the instinct of migration, which seems to control, in a greater or less degree, the motions of nearly all birds; for *Procellaria capensis* retires entirely from Cape latitudes for breeding-purposes between the months of November and March, while *P. æquinotialis* must start a month before that period and return somewhat earlier. *P. glacialis* I only look on as an accidental

visitor as far north as this; it probably inhabits the Antarctic regions.

I am of opinion that, at present, our list of the *Procellariidæ* of these parts is imperfect, from having, on one or two occasions, seen birds that I could not refer to any known species; but having been unable to procure specimens, it is useless to trouble the readers of 'The Ibis' with vague surmises: I can only trust that in future voyages I may be more successful. There is, however, some difficulty in this, as all these birds seem to prefer the vicinity of a ship in strong winds, when it would be impossible to lower a boat; and it is only from a careful search of the small barren and uninhabited oceanic islands that we must expect to increase our list of these birds.

From the 19th, until we neared Europa Island, no birds were observed; but on approaching that spot several Terns, which I took to be *Sterna brachypus*, flew about the ship. I had been looking forward anxiously to a visit to Europa, as it is totally uninhabited, and has never, to my knowledge, been visited by any one save Admiral Sir Henry Keppel and Captains Speke and Grant, who only stayed there a few hours. In this, however, I was disappointed; for a strong wind sprang up and raised such a sea that landing would have been impossible; so we steered clear of it, and I hoped for better luck on my return. Lying, as the island does, in the middle of the Mozambique channel, it would be interesting to know whether it is indebted to Africa or Madagascar for its avifauna*. It abounds in Turtle and a species of Plover, probably *Dromas ardeola*; and Speke says that there were land-birds on it. Its low sandy soil is covered with thick scrub, and it is believed that there is no water to be found. Its dimensions are five miles by three; and the nearest land, distant about one hundred and sixty-five miles, is Murderers' Bay in Madagascar. While passing through the Mozambique channel I

[* On none of the numerous islands studded through these seas visited by me, when cruising in H.M.S. 'Castor,' was any species of land-bird discovered, not even a Swallow. Sea-fowls and Waders are of so cosmopolite a character that they afford few or no data on which to found a theory of the geographical distribution of species.—E. L. LAYARD.]

was struck by the absence of all birds of passage ; beyond a Heron and a Bee-eater, I observed none.

On the 2nd of November we lay, becalmed, by the gigantic volcano of Comoro, where we caught several fish of various species, amongst others a most voracious shark, ten feet in length, which, previously to his capture, had actually attacked a boat in the water, shaking the rudder violently in his teeth ; but the poor beast had an excuse for this, as I found on dissection that his stomach contained nothing but a fragment of a woollen stocking which had been thrown overboard in the morning.

On the 6th we anchored at Zanzibar ; the channel between that island and the mainland was covered with large flocks of Terns, which, I believe, make their headquarters on Latham Island.

Owing to the intense heat and various engagements, I was unable to shoot much ; and the dense stupidity of an Arab, whom I paid to collect birds for me, frustrated my other attempts to procure specimens. However, through the kindness of the political agent and Dr. Kirk, I was not so badly off as I might have been.

On the 9th we left Zanzibar, intending to go to Johanna, and, if possible, to visit Latham Island on the way ; but neither attempt was successful. Latham Island is a low coral-bank about ten feet high ; it is only 400 feet long, by 200 broad ; and it lies at least twenty miles from the nearest land. It is reputed to be covered with sea-birds ; but I was unable to ascertain whether this was the case, as, notwithstanding our steaming at full speed, the current ran so strong that we only reached it in time to see a white bank silvered by the moon's rays, studded here and there with jagged lumps of coral, while the sun had just bid us adieu over the low African hills on our right. We then tried Johanna, as I wanted Tendrees, Guinea-fowls, and so forth ; but, after trying for some days to beat in a light wind against the whole force of the strong equatorial current, I bore up in disgust for Moçambic, where I anchored on the 16th of November.

The harbour of Moçambic is surrounded by sandy flats extending, in some places, two miles from the shore ; they form a

congenial feeding-ground for hundreds of Flamingos, Curlews, Plovers, and other waders, some of which are always on them. The shores are low, covered with cocoa-nut palms, and brambles, and *how* sandy can only be known to the wretched "human" who drags a twelve-bore gun and his weary limbs over the hot yielding surface.

Latterly, however, I did not scruple to avail myself of slave-labour to the extent of making four cheerful negroes carry me about in a luxurious shaded "marsheela," the palanquin of these parts, while I shot birds from under the awning.

We left Mozambic after a stay of about ten days, and on the 2nd of December arrived off the Kongoni mouth of the Zambesi river. Here we found Mr. Young and Mr. Faulkner, together with the rest of the Livingstone-Search Expedition, and took them to Simon's Bay. When rounding the Cape, on our return, not a single Cape Pigeon was visible; so they were evidently off to their unknown breeding-grounds.

By this mail I have forwarded to my friend Mr. Dresser some eggs of the Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuliginosa*); and, although these birds are not included in the East-African list, it may not be out of place for me to give here a brief description of their breeding-place at the island of Ascension*.

On the 8th of last June I was literally cast on shore on that island; for the periodical rollers were dashing against the coast, and my boat was upset in the surf; so giving myself a good shake, as the only available means of drying my clothes, I started for "Wide-awake Fair," the name which the blue-jackets who have visited the place have considered an appropriate one to designate the spot where the birds gather for nesting-purposes. Leaving Comfortless Cove about the middle of the day, I walked over two dreary miles of cinders and ashes, uncheered by a symptom of vegetation, before I noticed flocks of Terns converging from various parts of the ocean to a spot apparently about a mile in front of me; but as yet I observed nothing of

* [It may be necessary to observe that our contributor's account of Ascension and "Wide-awake Fair" was written in ignorance that the subject had been lately treated in a cotemporary (Zoologist, s. s. pp. 979-984).—ED.].

the "fair:" at length, on turning slightly to the left and surmounting a low ridge, the whole scene was disclosed.

A gradual incline of a quarter of a mile terminated in a plain of ten or fifteen acres in extent, which was literally covered with the birds. The plain was surrounded by low mountains, except on the side on which we stood; and being entirely sheltered from the wind, its heat under the full blaze of a tropical sun was very oppressive. No description can give an adequate idea of the effect produced by the thousands upon thousands of these wild sea-birds floating and screaming over this arid cinder-bed, the eggs and young scattered so thickly on the ground that in some instances it was impossible to avoid crushing them, and the bleached bones of dead birds distributed in all directions. During our short walk down the incline, large flocks of parent birds hovered over our heads, and assailed us with plaintive cries, regardless of our sticks, with which we might have killed any number of them; but their beautifully pure dark and white plumage and graceful motions caused it to appear almost a sin to knock any of them down. On arriving within the precincts of the breeding-grounds their numbers increased; large flocks were arriving in endless succession from seaward; clouds of birds rose from the ground, and, joining those already attending us, their wheelings and gyrations almost made us giddy. I sat down on a lump of cinder, and the society, being at length convinced that my policy was not aggressive, went on with the ordinary routine of incubation.

There were young of all sizes, from the little callow ones just hatched to the nearly fledged birds that fluttered and crawled like young pigeons; there were also lots of eggs exposed on the bare ground; but in most instances the old bird sat on its solitary treasure, hissing defiance as I approached, and fighting manfully if I attempted to remove it. The young are of a very light sooty colour both above and beneath, the ends of most of the feathers having a white spot the size of a pea, which gives them a speckled appearance. The whole of the "fair," both in smell and in appearance, reminds one of the effect produced by a sudden entry into a large pigeon-house.

In the interstices of the scoriæ and lava round this nursery

lurk numbers of wild cats (not *Felis catus*, but the domestic breed run wild) ; and the bones of both old and young birds tell the tale of the ravages they commit.

I was surprised to learn that all the Terns leave Ascension as soon as the young can fly ; but, from the shortness of my stay, I was unable to ascertain the precise times of their arrival and departure. I should, however, judge, by the appearance of the young at the time of my visit, that they would all be ready to start by the end of July. Whither do they go ?

There are, as far as I could learn, no other birds indigenous to the island, save a Swallow ; but Pheasants, Partridges, and Guinea-fowls have been turned down on the top of Green Mountain, the only green spot on Ascension, though whether these are our Partridge and Pheasant, or some species of Francolin, I did not ascertain ; probably the latter.

1. ELANUS CÆRULEUS (Desfont.).

Two young birds, captured in the island, were given to me at Zanzibar ; they were very tractable and tame, and I kept them for some time. Mr. Layard remarks (B. S. Afr. p. 27), "It is migratory, appearing about Cape Town in the month of May. I have never heard of its nesting in this country. To a certain extent this species is gregarious."

2. MEROPS SUPERCILIOSUS, Linn.

When at sea in the Mozambic Channel I heard one evening the chattering of Bee-eaters, and saw two sitting in the pendant loop of a small rope outside my port, evidently roosting for the night ; after some trouble I captured the male. I could not make up my mind for some time to what species this bird belonged ; and after puzzling over it for some days, and not being able to reconcile it with Swainson's *M. savignii*, I came to the conclusion that it was *M. superciliosus*, Linn., which he named from Brisson's description of a Madagascar specimen, and that *M. savignii* was either a distinct species or a strongly-marked variety, belonging more to the West Coast of Africa, where Swainson procured his specimens*.

* [Herr O. Finsch, to whose remarks on the subject we have before referred, (*suprà*, p. 155, note), thinks that *Merops superciliosus*, *M. ægyptius*, and *M. savignii* are but the same species in different stages of plumage.—ED.]

The principal differences between two examples, on comparison, are as follows :—

♂. <i>Merops savignii</i> :—	in.	♂. <i>Merops superciliosus</i> :—	in.
Length of wing.....	5·5	Length of wing.....	6·8
Length of bill	1·4	Length of bill	1·5
Projection of middle tail- feathers	1·9	Projection of middle tail- feathers	2·9
Top of head, neck, and back uni- form parrot-green.		Top of head dark metallic-green, and when looked at in the sun pure chestnut.	
Front of head white, slightly tinged with yellow close to the nostrils, and with light blue where it blends with the green of the crown; over each eye light turquoise-blue.		Front of head dirty white, ex- tending, in a band of the same colour, over each eye.	
Beneath and parallel to the usual black eye-stripe another blue stripe extends as far as the black on the ears.		Beneath the black eye-stripe a pure white one extends as far as the black one on the ears.	

3. MEROPS SAVIGNII, Swains.

Pretty common at Moçambic, where I procured some specimens. I may here mention that Mr. Faulkner, one of the Livingstone-Search Expedition, informed me that myriads of Bee-eaters form their nests in holes on the banks of the Shiré river*.

4. NECTARINIA NATALENSIS, Jard.

I procured a male specimen of this most beautiful Sun-bird at Moçambic, also a nest in an unfinished state. The structure was hanging from a twig about six feet from the ground; it was kidney-shaped, with the two lobes downward and the circular entrance opening from the bottom of one lobe; the material of which it was built was dry hay-like fibre and grass intricately interwoven. The bird was not at all rare.

5. CALAMODYTA RUFESCENS (Keys. & Bl.).

Flew on board the ship about 150 miles from the coast of Madagascar.

* [Cf. Ibis, 1864, p. 324.—ED.]

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| 6. PYCNONOTUS NIGRICANS (Vieill.). | } Plentiful at Moçambic. |
| 7. LANIARIUS CUBLA (Lath.). | |
| 8. JUIDA LEUCOGASTER (Gm.). | |
| 9. ANTHUS CAMPESTRIS, Bechst. | |
| 10. MACRONYX FLAVICOLLIS, Swains. | |
| 11. HYPHANTORNIS NIGRICEPS, Layard, B. S. Afr. p. 180. | |

In November at Moçambic these birds were plentiful, and busily engaged building their nests. I counted not less than twenty of their dome-shape habitations hanging from the leaves of the cocoa-nut palm; they were made of interwoven hay and leaf-fibres, and had an oval entrance from the bottom. The old birds were flying backwards and forwards with straws, and had all the confident and impudent manner of our domestic Sparrow; in fact the tree that they were building on was in the middle of a negro village.

I do not think that they bear confinement well, as some that I had in a roomy cage soon died.

12. CRITHAGRA CHRYSOPYGA (Swains.).

This pretty little bird was brought to the ship for sale at Zanzibar.

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| 13. PLOCEUS CAPENSIS (Linn.). | } Common at Moçambic. |
| 14. VIDUA PRINCIPALIS (Linn.). | |

15. SPERMESTES CUCULLATA, Swains.

Very common at Moçambic. I had about a dozen of them in a cage; their method of roosting is singular. Four or five would form a base, and on the backs of these three or four more would place themselves, till they were piled up in several tiers, forming a compact lump of feathers, some of them resting on their sides or backs. Occasionally, as may be easily imagined, the whole fabric would topple over; and when this occurred at night those that fell remained at the bottom of the cage.

16. CENTROPUS SENEGALENSIS (Linn.).

Not rare at Moçambic, hopping about the low bushes and

feeding on the ground. Swainson (Nat. Lib. xxiii. p. 186) describes specimens of this bird from *West Africa* as having "upper covers and tail brown, glossed with green." In the specimen that I procured the upper coverts are marked with longitudinal lines of pale fulvous brown, as are also the basal part of the tail-feathers. Neither are the greater scapulars and the tips of the lesser quills banded with dusky black.

17. *ŒNA CAPENSIS* (Linn.).

This beautiful little Dove was very common at Mozambique, concealed during the heat of the day, but flying swiftly through the cocoa-nut groves in the morning and evening.

18. *NUMIDA MITRATA*, Pall.

This and the following species were given to me by Dr. Kirk at Zanzibar, which island they inhabit.

19. *NUMIDA PUCHERANI*, Hartl.

I brought four of these birds alive to the Cape; but as I was unable, from illness, to attend to them when there, three died and one escaped, or I should have forwarded them to England. I fancy that they must be pretty hardy, as the one that got away is now living on the mountain-side at the back of Simon's Town, where it must be put to severe shifts to get a living amongst the parched bushes and rocks, besides which it survived six weeks' confinement on board ship. I sent the skins to Mr. Layard, who writes to me, "*Dr. Kirk, in epistola*", names this bird *N. pucherani*; it differs from my *N. cristata* obtained at Fazy and elsewhere; but I have no description to refer to"*.

20. *SQUATAROLA HELVETICA* (Linn.).

Common at Zanzibar, where I procured young birds in November.

21. *ARDEA BUBULCUS*, Savigny.

Many of these birds, in breeding-plumage, flew on board the ship, apparently from Madagascar, when we were about 150

* [Dr. Hartlaub's description is given Journ. für Orn. 1860, p. 341. Cf. P. Z. S. 1863, p. 126.—ED.]

miles from the land; they were plentiful at Zanzibar and Moçambic.

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| 22. ARDEA CINEREA, Linn. | } All these occur at Moçambic and Zanzibar, and probably on the intermediate coast. |
| 23. ARDEA GARZETTA, Linn. | |
| 24. NUMENIUS ARQUATUS (Linn.). | |
| 25. TOTANUS GLOTTIS (Linn.). | |
| 26. TRINGA SCHINZI, Brehm. | |
| 27. TRINGA SUBARQUATA (Gmel.). | |

28. PHENICOPTERUS ERYTHRÆUS, Verr.

Plentiful, in large flocks, on the Moçambic flats.

29. PLECTROPTERUS GAMBENSIS (Linn.)*.

Mr. Young, who conducted the expedition up the Zambesi in search of Dr. Livingstone, presented me with a living specimen of this bird, which he had brought from the Shiré river.

Mr. Layard, to whom I sent it to look at, writes to me saying, "*P. gambensis*, I think; but it differs much from my specimens, being very much blacker, and having far fewer white markings on it." I intend, if possible, to forward this bird to England alive.

30. THALASSIDROMA MELANOGASTER, Gould.

This species joined us directly we were outside False Bay, and remained with us till about lat. 27° S. I never noticed them to settle on the water, nor with the closest observation did I ever see how they fed; they would hover over refuse thrown from the ship, but did not appear to touch the water, or patter along its surface like *T. pelagica*. That they do feed on spawn I have previously noticed. Although they were in hundreds I never noticed a *T. leucogaster*, and I should not wonder if it did not eventually turn out that it is only an accidental variety of this species.

Mr. Layard, however, informs me that he has both species in the South-African Museum.

* [Qu. *P. rueppelli*, Sclater, P. Z. S. 1859, p. 131, pl. cliii., and 1860, pp. 38-42?—ED.]

+ 31. THALASSIDROMA PELAGICA (Linn.).

This bird replaced *T. melanogaster* when we were between the latitudes of the Zambesi and Zanzibar, the former of these places being, I suspect, its extreme southern range, as Mr. Layard does not notice it in his work.

+ 32. PROCELLARIA GIGANTEA, Gmel.

The Giant-Petrel was not uncommon from the Cape to lat. 27° S., where it left us. At night, when hovering round the ship, it emits the most diabolical sound, between a croak and a scream; this considerably startles the mariner, who does not know to what it is attributable, especially as it is often sounded within a few feet of his ear.

+ 33. PROCELLARIA GLACIALOIDES, A. Smith.

Only one came under my observation; his habits appeared very similar to those of the preceding species.

+ 34. PROCELLARIA CAPENSIS, Linn.

Decidedly the commonest of the large Petrels in these seas. I think their breeding-place is at present unknown.

35. PROCELLARIA CINEREA, Gmel.

36. PRION BANSKI (A. Smith).

{ Generally four or five
in sight from the
Cape to the entrance
of the Mozambic
Channel.

+ 37. DIOMEDEA EXULANS, Linn.

The Wandering Albatros is seldom seen near land. When well at sea we were visited by them, but I never saw them to the northward of the 27th parallel of south latitude. I am inclined to doubt whether this bird ever visits the northern hemisphere, notwithstanding that three or four specimens are recorded as having been obtained in Europe (though I can hear of none later than 1833)*; but, I believe, they have no more

* [Only two of these reported occurrences can, we think, be accepted as free from doubt:—that near Dieppe, about the year 1830, the head and feet of the bird being in the collection of the late M. Hardy (Decl. Orn. Eur. ii. p. 357); and that near Antwerp in 1833, when the bird was seen by Drapiez (Isis, 1835, p. 259). All the other notices possibly refer to

right to a place in the European avifauna than an escaped Cockatoo would have. I have myself passed two summers in Labrador, and crossed the North Atlantic Ocean eight times, but failed in ever seeing one. Without wishing to force my opinions on any one, I must say that I think more trash has been written about this bird than any other that I have seen noticed; for instance, Nuttall says (Man. Orn. ii. p. 341) that he was told that they fly near the water, "watching the motions of the Flying Fish, which they seize as they spring out of the water to shun the jaws of the larger fish which pursue them." Now I think that any one who has ever seen an Albatros feed will agree with me that such a statement must be purely derived from the imagination. I have *never* seen an Albatros take food on the wing; I do not think it would be possible for them to do so. Their method of feeding is to place their unwieldy bodies on the water as near to the floating piece of squid or refuse as possible, and after a careful survey they will swim up to it and eat it. As to the exciting chase after Flyingfish, I can only state that, where the Albatros abounds, the Flyingfish is rare, and scarcely ever seen above the surface. Then, again, there is the statement in Dr. Bennett's 'Gatherings of a Naturalist in Australia' (p. 78), in which that gentleman institutes an elaborate comparison between the flight of an Albatros and the course of a ship on the water; it is made more luminous by a very accurately drawn figure. But, unfortunately, as Captain F. W. Hutton has shown (Ibis, 1865, pp. 295-297), there is a mechanical principle, relating to the requirement of two component forces to form a resultant, which, from being entirely lost sight of in his argument, causes it to fall to the ground. Having often attentively watched the flight of the Albatros, I have ever failed to detect the mysterious and wonderful power of wing ascribed to it by observers like the above, who have perhaps been more highly favoured. None

Diomedea chlororhynchus, two specimens of which seem undoubtedly to have been killed near Kongsberg in Norway in April 1837, while, according to Messrs. Holl and Neville Wood, a few months previously, 25 Nov. 1836, one was shot on the Trent, at Stockwith, near Gainsborough (Analyst, vi. pp. 160, 161).—Ed.]

can regard without admiration the beautiful picture presented by this bird cleaving its way in graceful curves and sweeps over the wild troubled waves of the Atlantic; but its immense pectoral muscles and light hollow bones, added to its surface of wing, would amply account for all.

+ 38. *DIOMEDEA MELANOPHRYS*, Temm.

Locality the same as the preceding, but more given to visiting the bays and harbours of the coast. It is not at all an uncommon sight to see this bird sitting, with a superlatively stupid manner, close to the fishing-boats in False Bay, waiting for bait or refuse to be thrown overboard, when they swim up and devour it.

+ 39. *DIOMEDEA FULIGINOSA*, Gmel.

The rarest of the Albatroses this cruise, but seen in the same locality as the preceding species. *D. chlororhynchus* was not observed; probably it was away in its breeding-grounds.

40. *STERCORARIUS CATARRHACTES* (Linn.) ?

Off the Comoro Islands I saw one of these birds; but, as I did not procure a specimen, I may have been mistaken.

41. *STERNA VELOX*, Rüpp.

In great abundance at Moçambic. No other *Laridæ* were observed.

42. *FREGATA AQUILUS* (Linn.).

Visited by several of these birds when near the Comoro Islands. Mr. Layard adds, "They breed on Sandy island."

+ 43. *PHAETON RUBRICAUDA*, Bodd.

Several in the Moçambic channel.

XXV.—*On the Genus Acredula*. By R. B. SHARPE.

THE object of the present paper is to draw attention to the differences between the Bottle-Titmouse of the British Islands and the corresponding form inhabiting Scandinavia, and to adduce facts in favour of their recognition as distinct species. I undertook the investigation of the subject on reading, in my friend Mr. J. Edmund Harting's 'Birds of Middlesex' (p. 59), that there were in the collection of Mr. John Hancock, and in the